

Marc Buckhout

### [Foothills Focus](#)

Thousands of Arizonans showed up to honor military veterans on Monday during Memorial Day ceremonies at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona.

Beginning with a flyover by 1940 World War II trainers, from the Arizona Antique Airplane Association, the day saw tears shed, flags waved and both family member and fellow soldiers remembered for their sacrifice.

Congressman Harry Mitchell took time to express his appreciation for both military veterans, but also the families of the veterans.

"As a father and a grandfather I understand there are no make up days for missed birthdays, missed anniversaries, missed holidays," he said. "You are unsung heroes. We salute your sacrifice. I've been fortunate to work on the House Committee for Veteran affairs. There are no words to express the appreciation for the ultimate sacrifice that our military men and women are willing to brave."

Governor Jan Brewer addressed the crowd and talked about being able to hear the American sound, one which Ronald Reagan once described as being alive and well in our country.

Reagan described the American sound as being, "hopeful, big-hearted, idealistic, daring, decent and fair. That's our heritage. That's our song."

"That American sound seems to echo more vibrantly on Memorial Day," Brewer said. "You can here it from the headstones here."

In addressing the men and women buried at the National Cemetery, at 23029 North Cave Creek Road in Phoenix, which was dedicated in 1978, Brewer said that those in attendance have a responsibility to make sure their sacrifices weren't made in vain.

"We are here to read your names, touch your markers, because you all gave the last measure of devotion," she said. "We have not forgotten. God bless the memories of our veterans. God bless their families. God Bless Arizona and God bless the U.S.A."

While military group after military group set up wreath's honoring fallen comrades State Treasurer Dean Martin summed up the meaning of the day.

"George Patton once said do not mourn that such men have died, but thank God that such men have lived."

Martin said in order to honor our veterans sacrifice those that are living have to make certain decisions.

"You have the choice to do good, to do evil or to do nothing," Martin said. "The men and women we are honoring today chose duty. We have the duty to comfort the families of the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. We have lost some of the greatest among us. We must sacrifice ourselves a little each day in their memory. Honor, duty, and sacrifice, those are the words they lived and died by."